

Opinion

Municipalities shouldn't legislate morality

Do we really want to spend our time debating whether or not we should permit lapdancing in our society?

If someone wants to have a naked woman (or man) sit on them, and then pay them for it, is it any of our business, especially when they can buy some truly horrific pornography at the neighborhood corner store?

Metropolitan Toronto apparently thinks we should care. The bureaucrats at Metro Hall have asked local municipalities to strike up a by-law banning the practice of lapdancing.

Not that there's a whole lot of it going on in our area to begin with, but Mississauga has seen fit to ban the act and other towns, like Vaughan, may enact bylaws to keep the dirty dancers



Viewpoint

Andrew Mair

off their streets.

Whether there's a strip bar in your neck of the woods or not, your municipal representatives feel it's up to them to dictate what you can and cannot do.

But let's face it, this is an issue that affects very few people.

There are a handful in every thousand residents who frequent strip clubs. Dancers do not make up a large part of our workforce. Their ranks are split

some like lapdancing for the money, the others feel their acts should be kept as hands-off "entertainment."

A disc jockey who plays music for strippers in a Woodbridge club told the Weekender that since the ban was imposed, up to 80 dancers a night have tried to "freelance" at his club. They know the money is good, and are willing to travel to get it.

The DJ even said he was benefiting from the Metro ban, making \$540 on one night in tips from freelance

dancers who lined up to have their particular musical set played. If you're on stage, he said, you make far more money following your act in the subsequent lapdancing deals. The situation resembles prohibition, the DJ said. You can't offer something and then take it away, it will just go underground the way prostitution did and the way prostitution is presently.

He also said a minority of the customers at the club actually ever ask for a lapdance. He added that he didn't see what all the fuss was about. And he's got a very good point.

I am not in favor of the practice, nor strip clubs to begin with, but municipal governments have to come off their high moral horses. It is not their place to legislate morality.

Network television has a repertoire of sports bloopers

I'm sorry that I missed the 30th anniversary of the Sonny Liston/Cassius Clay fight last spring. (You may or may not remember that May 25, 1965 was the night a fast-mouth Cassius Clay - soon to be reborn as Muhammad Ali - decked a growling bear of a boxer named Sonny Liston, against all predictions and thereby won the title of Heavyweight Champion of the World.)

You may also have forgotten or repressed the memory of



Basic Black

Arthur Black

the performance of Robert Goulet that night. Mister Goulet, a Canadian, had been hired to sing, before millions of boxing fans, the national anthem of the United States of America. And that night

Robert's rich baritone rang out from ringside, reverberating from the arena walls, bouncing off the interstellar satellites around the cosmos merrily tympaning against the eardrums of quadzillions of fight fans from Kenora to Korea, from Tswwassen to Timbuktu.

There was only one teensy weensy thing wrong.

The words. Robert Goulet forgot the words.

Right there on national make that international tele-

vision. Canada's own Robert Goulet, hemming and hawing and erring and aahing over the words to the US national anthem.

Oh well. Not as if the Yankees haven't paid us back. Remember 1985? Yankee Stadium? The Blue Jays hell bent for the World Series? And Mary O'Dowd stands up to warble the anthems.

She did real well on the Star Spangled Banner but she bobbed the words to O Canada like a third-string shortstop with peanut butter on his glove.

And just last year we suffered through the performance of Dennis Parks, a lounge singer signed to sing the anthems at the opening of a Canadian Football League game south of the border.

Dennis did a fine job. He had memorized every word of our patriotic

ditty.

Unfortunately, he neglected to note the tune. When Dennis sang O Canada, it sounded a lot like Auld Lang Syne with overtones of For He's a Jolly Good Fellow.

And remember the Heidi Games? Let me take you back to 1968. The New York Jets are playing the Oakland Raiders. The Jets are leading 32-29, with just over a minute left in the game.

We're talking Superbowl Countdown here, where every game counts. Jets 32, Oakland 29, just over a minute left.

And NBC television switches to the Sunday Night movie - Heidi. Sports fans of North America went ballistic, tens of thousands of viewers called NBC to vent their wrath.

And those were just the TV watchers who knew how to dial a phone!



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